

FILED

MAR 18 2020
SUSAN J. MARINELLA
Columbia County Clerk
And Clerk of the Superior Court
By _____ Deputy

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN AND FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF)	
THE RESPONSE BY COLUMBIA COUNTY)	NO. 2001
SUPERIOR COURT TO THE PUBLIC)	EMERGENCY ORDER #1
HEALTH EMERGENCY IN)	ORDER ON EXPANDED CRITERIA
WASHINGTON STATE)	FOR EXCUSING JURORS BASED
)	UPON PUBLIC HEALTH
)	EMERGENCY

This matter comes before the Court on the public health emergency in Washington State.

1. On February 29th, 2020, the Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the public health emergency posed by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

2. On March 4th, 2020, Washington Supreme Court Chief Justice Debra Stephens entered an Emergency Order that states, in part, as follows:

WHEREAS, during this state of emergency, it may become necessary for courts in these counties to close, relocate, or otherwise significantly modify their regular operations; and

WHEREAS, presiding judges in these counties need sufficient authority to effectively administer their courts in response to this state of emergency, including authority to adopt, modify, and suspend court rules and orders as warranted to address the emergency conditions.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the Court’s authority to administer justice and to ensure the safety of court personnel, litigants, and the public,
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

- The Presiding Judges of the Washington courts are authorized to adopt, modify, and suspend court rules and orders, and to take further actions concerning court operations as warranted to address the current public health emergency;

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- Each court shall immediately transmit copies of emergency local rules adopted or modified to address the public health emergency to the Administrative Office of the Courts in lieu of the requirements of General Rule 7;
 - Each court that closes pursuant to this Order or General Rule 21 shall sign an administrative order closing the court, file the original with the clerk of the affected court, and notify the Administrative Office of the Courts as soon as practicable.
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7 3. WHEREAS, on March 13th, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency in response to COVID-19; and

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9 4. WHEREAS, on March 13th, 2020 Washington State Governor Jay Inslee signed a Proclamation closing all public and private schools within the State for a period of six weeks; and further banning all events and gatherings of 250 persons or more within the State; and

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11 5. WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, Washington State Governor Inslee delivered yet Another Declaration of Emergency: limiting all gatherings to 50 or less; and temporarily shutting down restaurants, bars, entertainment and recreational facilities.

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13 6. The County Public Health and the Center for Disease Control have both recently recommended that people at higher risk of severe illness should stay home and away from large groups of people as much as possible, including public places with lots of people and large gatherings where there will be close contact with others. This includes concert venues, conventions, sporting events, and crowded social gatherings. These health officials identify people at high risk as including people:

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- Over 60 years of age
 - With underlying health conditions including include heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes
 - With weakened immune systems
 - Who are pregnant
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21 7. WHEREAS Jury Service in the Columbia County Superior Court necessarily Involves congregating in relatively close proximity groups of persons who come to court in response to a summons; and

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24 8. WHEREAS regular Court hearings in the Columbia County Superior Court necessarily involves congregating in relatively close proximity groups of persons who come to court in response to a summons, and/or in order to observe court proceedings; and

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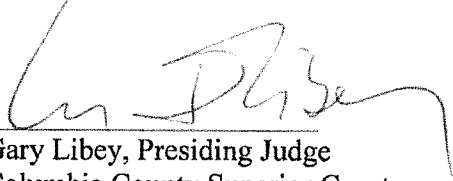
26 Therefore, IT IS ORDERED under the authority by Chief Justice Stephens' Order and the authority as a Presiding Judge for Columbia County that the Superior Court shall enact policies to automatically excuse persons from the jury service who are summoned and fit the public health criteria for high risk populations; regular court hearings shall be scheduled and re-scheduled to minimize congregation of persons; and public seating and congregation shall be limited so as to enforce public/social distancing as is recommended;

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1 At a minimum, all Judges and court staff shall follow this policy and it shall be
2 published in all usual locations.

3 It is so Ordered.

4 This 16th day of March, 2020

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7 Gary Libey, Presiding Judge
8 Columbia County Superior Court

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